

Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund
DRAFT

Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2006 DRAFT!

Members Present

Terry Glenn	Department of Corrections, Richmond
Doug Harris, J.D.	State Health Commissioner Designee, Richmond
Gregory Helm, M.D., Ph.D.	University of Virginia Medical Center, Charlottesville
Teresa Poole	Lakeview Neurocare, Roanoke
David Reid, Psy.D., Chair	Comprehensive Health Systems, Fishersville
Jim Rothrock <i>(ex-officio)</i>	Department of Rehabilitative Services, Richmond

Members Not Present

Richard Bendall, Jr., M.D. Monelison Family Physician, Lynchburg

Staff

Kristie Chamberlain	Department of Rehabilitative Services, CNI Program Administrator
Patti Goodall	Department of Rehabilitative Services, Manager, Brain Injury and Spinal Cord Injury Services

Guests

Tony Gentry, PhD, OTR/L	Virginia Commonwealth University, Department of Occupational Therapy
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The Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Advisory Board met for a regular quarterly business meeting at 8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Conference Room 101, in Richmond, Virginia.

OPENING PROTOCOL

Dr. David Reid, Chair, convened the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

Public Comment Period

No public comments were offered.

Approval of June 28, 2006 Minutes

Commissioner Rothrock made a motion to approve the June 28, 2006 meeting with a correction on the date of the “Approval of the Agenda” item; Terry Glenn seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Approval of September 22, 2006 Agenda

Teresa Poole made a motion to approve the agenda of the September 22, 2006 meeting; Doug Harris seconded; motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation from Tony Gentry, Ph.D., OTR/L, Virginia Commonwealth University, Department of Occupational Therapy

Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Trust Fund Grant #03-213: Consortium for Handheld Technology

Dr. Gentry presented on the status of the grant, successes, delays etc. This grantee was awarded a no cost extension for 12 months, through December 2006. The no-cost extension was requested because of unforeseen delays on the grant: the Principal Investigator left for another job, and Dr. Fred Orelove, Executive Director of The Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), stepped in as PI. In addition, the VCU Internal Review Board process took longer than expected.

The intent of the grant is to use handheld computers to improve the functional performance of individuals with brain injury and autism. Grant administrators projected that 50 individuals would be served through the grant, and Dr. Gentry stated that the actual number will be 74. Dr. Gentry explained to the board that this is the first time anyone has ever reported a functional performance change with cognition and brain injury. He has given 56 presentations, as far away as California. A training piece will be added to the website during the last quarter of the grant. They are currently investigating disability-specific software applications.

Dr. Gentry recently opened, and is now operating, the VCU “Assistive Technology for Cognition Lab” (there will be an Open House in fall ’07). This lab will allow the Consortium to continue its efforts beyond the end of the grant contract. A website for the CNI grant, www.vcu.edu/partnership/pda will redirect individuals to a website at the VCU Department of Occupational Therapy once the grant funding ends.

He stated that grant staff have been searching diligently for financial resources to support the continuation of the program which he feels has been very successful. Fifty individuals across the Commonwealth are on the waiting list for services from the Handheld Technology project (Dr. Gentry receives about 5 calls/day and numerous emails asking for assistance).

Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative (CNI) Grant #05-309: The Use of Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) in the Workplace

The Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University received a one-year CNI grant to evaluate the effectiveness of the use of Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) in the workplace. This grant was funded under the authority of the DRS Commissioner to fund research grants using unobligated funds from the CNI Trust Fund each year. VCU requested a

nine-month no cost extension to complete the project due to delays in obtaining data. Dr. Gentry stated that 22 individuals came to a workshop to train “job coaches” in the use of PDAs on job sites and to support vocational performance by providing structure and guidance to a worker via an individually programmed PDA. Obtaining the job coaching data took longer than expected and grant staff also learned that PDA software can be successful for job coaches, but there are glitches that will need to be addressed. Dr. Gentry developed an on-line version of the “PDA for Job Coaches” workshop. The on-line training will remain in place even after completion of the grant.

Financial Report

Kristie Chamberlain provided a comprehensive overview of the CNI Trust Fund finances. Since its inception in 1998 through August 30, 2006, the Trust Fund has awarded a total of \$12,209,176.11 in grant awards, and has expended \$297,742.42 on administrative services (which began in FY '03). The fund currently has an obligated balance (i.e., funding that has been awarded to grant proposals) of \$1,730,067.04. The Trust Fund receives approximately \$105,000 per month. When new grant awards under Option-A RFP are funded, the Fund will continue to carry an “obligated” balance.

Award of New State Funded Brain Injury Services Contracts

DRS was awarded funding by the General Assembly for the development / expansion of brain injury services in unserved and underserved areas of Virginia: \$285,000 in the governor’s budget for direct case management services in Southwest Virginia; \$150,000 to expand case management services; and \$725,000 for brain injury services across the state. The Virginia Alliance of Brain Injury Services Providers (VABISP) and the Virginia Brain Injury Council (VBIC) jointly identified underserved areas in the state and the Council, per language included in the budget amendment, submitted funding recommendation to DRS. Thirteen proposals were received and seven recommended for funding, with negotiation of terms and conditions with five applicants. Services to be funded included regional resource coordination; case management; and day / clubhouse programs. DRS Brain Injury & Spinal Cord Injury Services, which manages the state contracts, anticipates a start-up date of mid-October for all funded contracts.

Release Date for Option-A Research Request for Proposals (RFP)

The Board discussed the release date of the Option-A Research Request for Proposal (RFP). **Jim Rothrock made a motion that DRS release an Option-A RFP in January 2007 (staff to determine the exact date), with an effective contract start-up date of July 1, 2007; Terry Glenn seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.**

Timeline:

RFP released by January 30, 2007

Grant proposals due on March 30, 2007

Proposals reviewed and scored by expert panel from April 6, 2007 to May 11, 2007

CNI Advisory Board meeting to determine funding awards on May 25, 2006 (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Start date for contracts of July 1, 2006.

The Board discussed at length the possibility of identifying or including specific priorities in the Option-A RFP. **Terry Glenn made a motion to issue the Option-A Research RFP without specific priorities, but to include language stating that an applicant that has received CNI grant funding previously is not precluded from submitting a grant proposal again; Doug Harris seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.** The Board requested that staff state clearly that although a previously funded grant applicant is not precluded from applying again, it should be emphasized that the Board will review “repeat awards” very closely. This allows the Board to encourage the funding of new researchers, while recognizing that promising results from initial grant funding deserve consideration for a researcher to propose research that is related but not repetitive nor a continuation of previously funded research.

Dr. Helm suggested that a minimum of three (3) independent expert reviewers (i.e., neurosurgeons and neuroscientists from out of state) review ALL of the applications, rather than having one person review and rate up to three proposals. Staff advised the Board to consider the increased cost if reviewers are reimbursed at \$150 per proposal. Staff suggested that the Board allow staff to review the type of proposals received and whether they will require physician / neuroscientist level reviewers for basic science / clinical research proposals, or neuropsychologist and other Ph.D. level reviewers for applied research proposals. The Board requested staff to prepare a summary of previously funded research grant awards to accompany the current research proposals to be reviewed.

To increase the variety of grant applications, Dr. Helm suggested that disseminate the RFP to faculty in neurology, neurosurgery, neuroscience, physiology / anatomy, pathology to the major research universities (e.g., VCU, UVA, VA TECH, EVMS). Dr. Reid also requested that staff explore the possibility of disseminating the RFP to psychologists / neuropsychologist in the Commonwealth. Staff advised the Board that this would likely increase administrative (mailing) costs, though not significantly.

OLD BUSINESS

2nd Emily Couric Research Colloquium

The 2nd Emily Couric Research Colloquium held August 28 was reviewed by Kristie Chamberlain, staff, who stated that evaluations rated the Colloquium positively and that grantees felt “honored” to present before the Board. A previous grantee who attended the Colloquium suggested that the Board consider asking various research universities to host the event on-site, thereby increasing attendance and allowing more researchers, residents, and students to attend.

A Community Grants Colloquium is planned for 2008.

Next Meeting Date

The next quarterly meeting of the CNI Advisory Board will be held Friday, December 8, 2006 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at DRS Central Office in Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Reid, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 10:56 a.m.